

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for providing a complete set of after sales service data over the Internet from a manufacturer to an authorized user, the method comprising:

creating a database containing said complete set of after sales service data, including a plurality of equipment service data elements;

providing an access point for a user to access the database;

verifying that the user is authorized to access the database; and

providing the user with interactive, collaborative access to said manufacturer and to the database over the Internet, in a secure manner if the user is authorized to access the database, whereby said access provides the user with a virtual office to enter a variety of transactions using data elements in the database.

2. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 1, wherein the plurality of equipment service data elements comprise data elements regarding at least one of: sales, customer history, equipment history, warranties, service calls, preventive maintenance, repairs, spare parts, accounts receivable, and accounts payable.

3. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the user comprises at least one of: a customer, a potential customer, and a franchisee.

4. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the access point is an Internet web site.

5. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein the database is created by [a] said manufacturer, said manufacturer manufactures of a product, and wherein the user is a service provider authorized by the manufacturer to service the product.

6. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 5, wherein the service data elements relate to at least one of: selling maintenance contracts, call management, franchisee management, spare parts sales, warranty management, and knowledge management.

7. (Currently amended) A system for providing a complete set of after sales service data over the Internet from a manufacturer to an authorized user, the system comprising:

a database containing said complete set of after sales service data, including a plurality of equipment service data elements;

an access point for a user to access the database over the Internet;

means for verifying that the user is authorized to access the database; and

means for providing the user with interactive, collaborative access to said manufacturer and to the database over the Internet, in a secure manner if the user is authorized to access the database, whereby said access provides the user with a virtual office to enter a variety of transactions using data elements in the database.

8. (Previously Presented) The system of Claim 7, wherein the plurality of equipment service data elements comprise data elements regarding at least one of: sales, customer history, equipment history, warranties, service calls, preventive maintenance, repairs, spare parts, accounts receivable, and accounts payable.

9. (Original) The system of Claim 7, wherein the user comprises at least one of: a customer, a potential customer, and a franchisee.

10. (Original) The system of Claim 7, wherein the access point is an Internet web site.

11. (Currently Amended) The system of Claim 7, wherein the database is created by [a] said manufacturer, said manufacturer manufactures of a product, and wherein the user is a service provider authorized by the manufacturer to service the product.

12. (Original) A system according to Claim 11, wherein the service data elements relate to at least one of: selling maintenance contracts, call management, franchisee management, spares sales, warranty management, and knowledge management.

13. (Currently amended) A program storage device readable by machine, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the machine to perform method steps for providing a complete set of after sales service data over the Internet from a manufacturer to an authorized user, said method steps comprising:

creating a database containing said complete set of after sales service data, including a plurality of equipment service data elements;

providing an access point for a user to access the database over the Internet;

verifying that the user is authorized to access the database; and

providing the user with interactive, collaborative access to said manufacturer and to the database over the Internet, in a secure manner if the user is authorized to access the database, whereby said access provides the user with a virtual office to enter a variety of transactions using data elements in the database .

14. (Previously Presented) The program storage device of Claim 13, wherein the plurality of equipment service data elements comprise data elements regarding at least one of: sales, customer history, equipment history, warranties, service calls, preventive maintenance, repairs, spare parts, accounts receivable, and accounts payable.

15. (Original) The program storage device of Claim 13, wherein the user comprises at least one of: a customer, a potential customer, and a franchisee.

16. (Original) The program storage device of Claim 13, wherein the access point is an Internet web site.

17. (Currently Amended) The program storage device of Claim 13, wherein the database is created by [a] said manufacturer, said manufacturer manufactures of a product, and wherein the user is a service provider authorized by the manufacturer to service the product.

18. (Previously Presented) A program storage device according to Claim 17, wherein the service data elements relate to at least one of: selling maintenance contracts, call management, franchisee management, spare parts sales, warranty management, and knowledge management.

19. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 1, wherein:

said access provides a direct information flow from field to a service department, a design department and a quality department; and

the user is a dealer/franchisee, and said access provides the dealer/franchisee with (i) previous repair and customer information as a service call is received, and said dealer/franchisee uses said access to enter technical and billing information, and to pass on field information to OEM department.

20. (New) A method according to Claim 19, wherein:

the plurality of equipment service data elements comprise: sales, customer history, equipment history, warranties, service calls, preventive maintenance, repairs, spare parts, accounts receivable, and accounts payable;

the user is a service provider franchisee;

the service data elements comprise: selling maintenance contracts, call management, franchisee management, spare parts sales, warranty management, and knowledge management;

the creating step includes the step of providing an Internet Enabled Equipment and Appliance feature triggered by a repair event to offer predictive and need based repair service, and to study equipment usage and failure patterns; and

the method comprises the further steps of:

providing rules and conditions that help determine how a product repair is handled; and

feeding information back, after a transaction is completed, to underlying systems that maintain product and service information.